

TM

# WHAT DREAMS MAY COME

**FAMILY SKELETONS**  
PART TWO

INSIDE SARAH COOPER'S CLOSET, WHERE A DOWNY BED OF DREAMS HAS BECOME A SPRAWLING NIGHTMARE ...

I AM  
LURK!

WELCOME TO  
MY WORLD,  
GLARE!

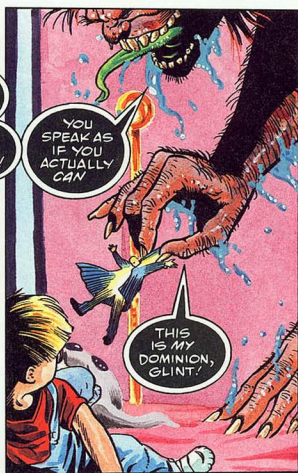
WELCOME TO YOUR  
DESTRUCTION!

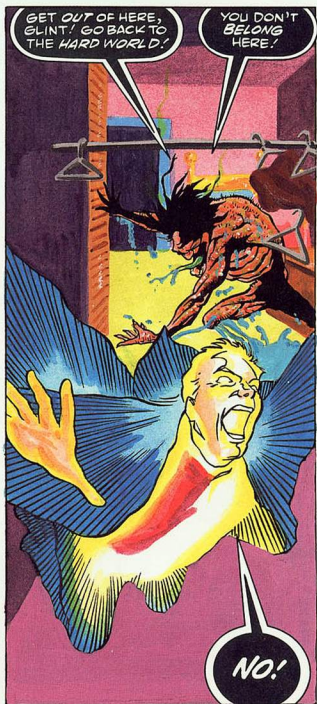
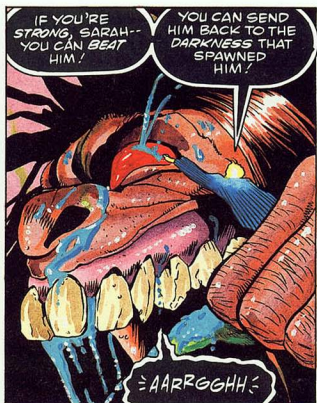


PLOTTED BY: ED POLGARDY,  
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DRAWN BY: LOUIS SMALL, JR.  
INKED BY: MIKE BARREIRO  
AND BOB DOWNS

PAINTED BY: TIM PERKINS  
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EDITED BY: ED POLGARDY









H-HE HURLED ME  
CLEAN OUT OF THE  
SUBSTRATUM.

THAT'S NEVER  
HAPPENED  
BEFORE.

AND THE  
CHILDISH  
DOOR THAT  
WAS MY  
ENTRANCE  
BACK INTO  
LURK'S DOMAIN  
HAS DIS-  
APPEARED.



I'LL HAVE TO FIND SOME OTHER  
WAY BACK INTO --

WHAT IN BLAZES IS  
GOING ON IN HERE?

ISN'T THIS ROOM  
ENOUGH OF A  
MESS?

I'M SORRY,  
MISTER COOPER.  
JUST A -- AH --  
MINOR UNEXPECTED  
SETBACK.



DO YOU HAVE  
ANY IDEA  
WHERE SARAH  
DISAPPEARED  
TO, MICHAEL?

I'M AFRAID I  
KNOW EXACTLY  
WHERE SHE'S  
GONE, RACHEL.

THEN WE  
SHOULD CALL  
THE POLICE!

THERE'S NOTHING  
THEY CAN DO TO  
HELP US.

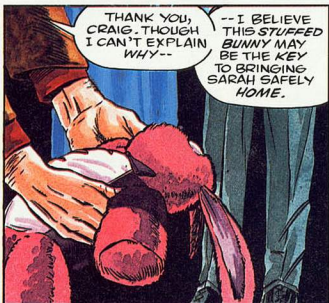


THEN WHAT  
DO WE DO?

WE CAN'T JUST ABANDON  
HER! SHE'S MY BABY,  
FOR GOD'S SAKE!

SHE'S MY  
BABY, TOO,  
RACHEL.

LET'S GIVE MISTER  
ALEXANDER A LITTLE  
MORE TIME ...



THANK YOU,  
CRAIG. THOUGH  
I CAN'T EXPLAIN  
WHY --

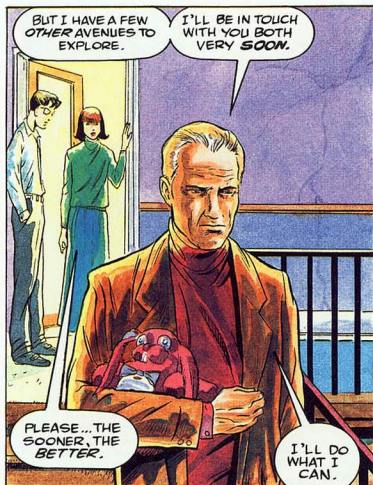
-- I BELIEVE  
THIS STUFFED  
BUNNY MAY BE THE KEY  
TO BRINGING  
SARAH SAFELY  
HOME.



LOOK, RIGHT  
NOW I'M  
WILLING TO  
TRY ANY-  
THING.

YOU WANT US TO LEAVE  
YOU ALONE IN HERE AGAIN?

NO, I'M AFRAID  
THAT DOOR IS  
CLOSED TO ME NOW.





THIS ONCE-GREAT CITY THAT  
SURROUNDS US HATH BECOME  
A DEN OF INIQUITY!

SIN AND DEGRADA-  
TION DOTH ABOUND  
AT EVERY  
TURN!

SO WHAT'S  
YER POINT,  
SPARKY?

YEAH, TELL  
US SOMETHIN' WE  
DON'T KNOW.

YE WHO HATH SUFFERED  
MOST GRIEVOUSLY AT  
THE HANDS OF THE  
SINFUL ARE THE  
CHOSEN OF THE  
LORD...

...AND I HAVE BEEN SENT  
TO GATHER YE THAT TOGETHER  
WE MIGHT RECLAIM THAT  
WHICH IS RIGHTFULLY OURS!

DON'T DO  
ME NO  
FAVORS,  
OKAY?

LIFE IS TOUGH  
ENOUGH.

JACKETS  
MINE,  
MAN! I  
SAW IT  
FIRST!

BUT 'TIS  
FOR JUST SUCH  
AS THEE I HAVE  
COME.

BLAZES  
YA DID!

DO YE NOT  
WISH TO LAY  
DOWN THY  
CHAINS?

TO REGAIN THAT  
WHICH THE LORD HATH  
DECEED IS RIGHTFULLY  
THINE?

DAMN STRAIGHT  
WE DO.

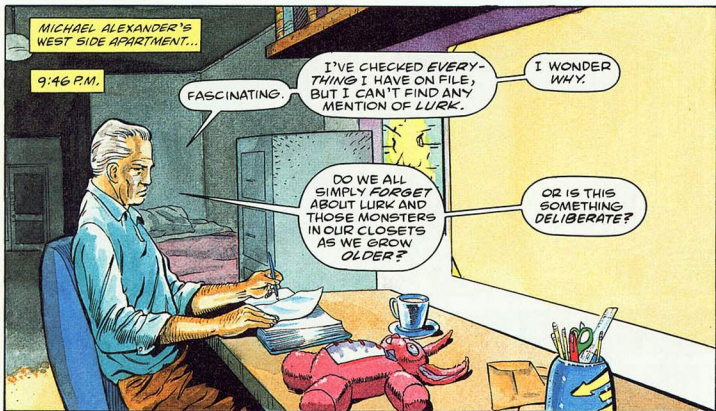
THEN JOIN  
ME.

TAKE UP  
ARMS AGAINST  
THY SEA OF  
TROUBLES...

...AND BY  
OPPOSING,  
END THEM!

AMEN T' THAT,  
BROTHER.

AMEN.



MICHAEL ALEXANDER'S  
WEST SIDE APARTMENT...

9:46 P.M.

FASCINATING.

I'VE CHECKED EVERY-  
THING I HAVE ON FILE,  
BUT I CAN'T FIND ANY  
MENTION OF LURK.

I WONDER  
WHY.

DO WE ALL  
SIMPLY FORGET  
ABOUT LURK AND  
THOSE MONSTERS  
IN OUR CLOSETS  
AS WE GROW  
OLDER?

OR IS THIS  
SOMETHING  
DELIBERATE?



AND WHY WAS EVERY-  
THING ELSE IN SARAH'S  
BEDROOM RIPPED TO  
RIBBONS--

--BUT  
NOT  
THIS  
STUFFED  
BUNNY?

WHAT STRANGE  
SECRETS DO  
YOU KNOW  
ABOUT ALL  
THIS, MISTER  
FLOPSO?

WHAT  
WOULD YOU  
TELL ME  
IF YOU ONLY  
COULD?

WELL, GEEZ,  
PAL--ALL YA  
GOTTA DO IS  
ASK!

EXCUSE  
ME?

DON'T LOOK  
SO SURPRISED,  
PAL, YOU AIN'T  
THE ONLY ONE  
BOUNCIN' AROUND  
THE SUBSTRATUM,  
Y'KNOW.

BUT  
WHY?



HEY, SARAH'S MY BEST BUDDY,  
POPS. SO LONG AS SHE BELIEVES  
IN ME, I'M REAL!

BUT WHAT ARE  
WE SQUATIN' HERE  
JAWIN' FOR? SARAH  
NEEDS OUR HELP,  
RIGHT?

UNFORTUNATELY,  
LURK SEALED MY  
ONLY WAY INTO HIS  
DOMAIN WHEN HE  
THREW ME OUT.

SHEESH, THAT ALL?  
NO SWEAT.

DON'CHA KNOW  
THERE'S A BACK  
WAY IN?

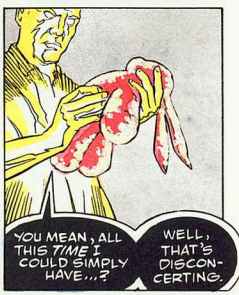
WON'T BE  
EASY-- BUT  
WE WON'T BE  
DISCOVERED.

NOW GRAB MY  
HARD WORLD  
SELF, AN'  
LET'S GET  
HOPPIN'!

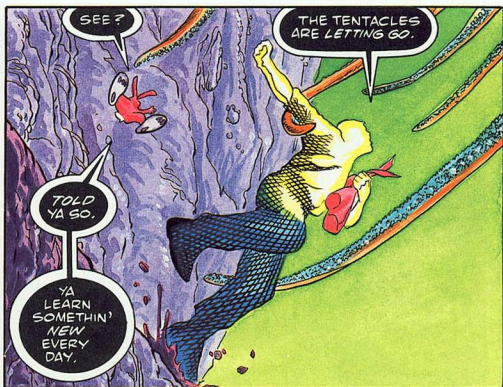
BUT I CAN'T  
TOUCH HARD  
WORLD OBJECTS  
WHILE I'M IN  
QUANTUM  
FORM.

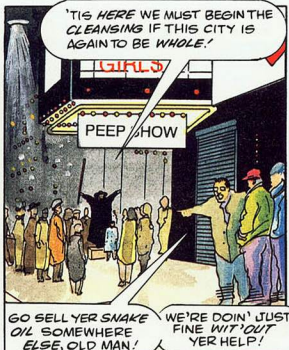
SURE  
YA CAN--  
IF YA  
BELIEVE  
YA CAN.

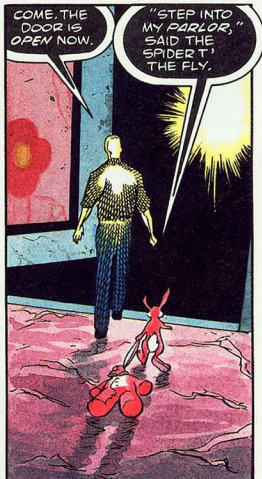
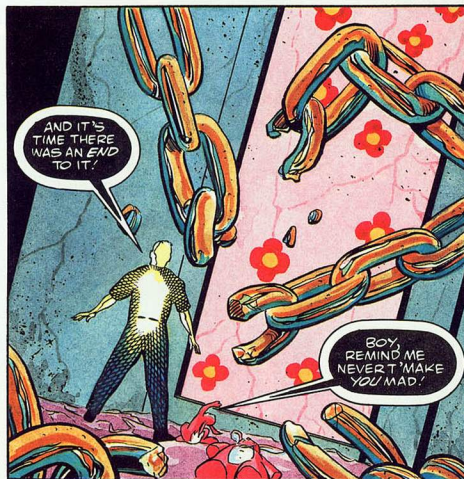
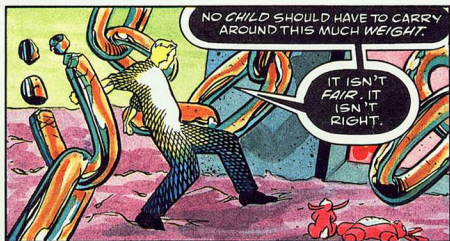
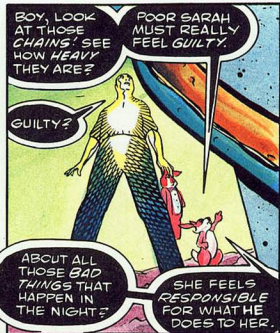
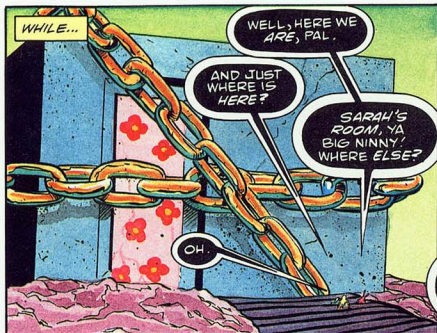
HMMM.



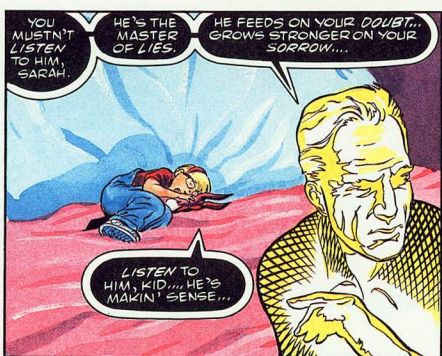
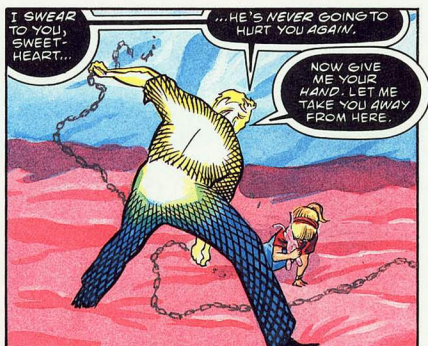




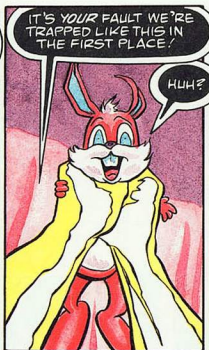


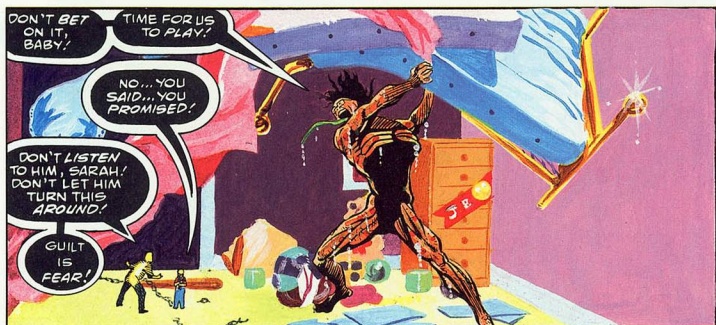


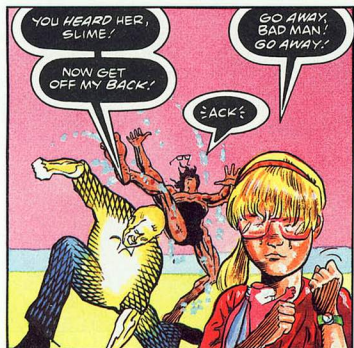
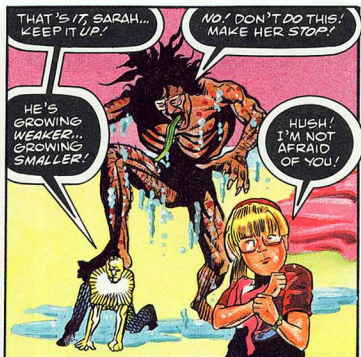


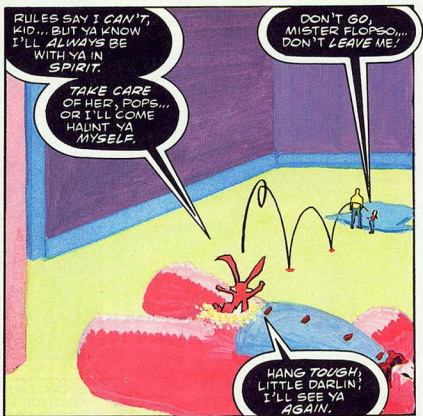












YOU WERE RIGHT TO CALL ME, RACHEL. THIS ROOM'S A BIGGER MESS NOW THAN--

--HEY, LOOK!

SARAH?

SARAH!

MOMMY!

OH, DARLING!

OH, THANK GOD!

OH, THANK YOU, MICHAEL-- FOR BRINGING HER HOME TO ME!

BELIEVE ME... IT WAS MY PLEASURE.

HEY, SARAH SWEETIE, DON'T YOU HAVE A "HI" FOR YOUR DADDY?

HELLO, DADDY.

OH, SARAH... JUST LOOK AT YOU. WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?

THAT, I'M AFRAID, IS A VERY LONG STORY.

WOULD YOU MIND STEPPING OUTSIDE FOR A MOMENT, MISTER COOPER?

I'D LIKE TO TALK TO YOU IN PRIVATE, IF I MAY.

SURE. THAT'S THE LEAST I CAN DO FOR THE MAN WHO SAVED MY DAUGHTER.

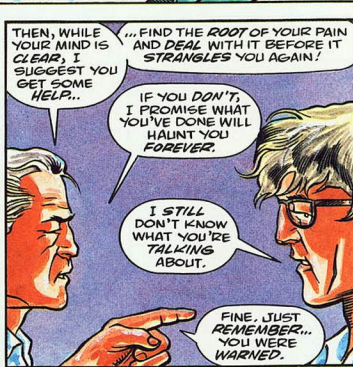
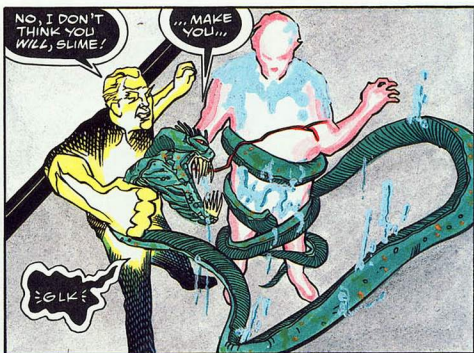
WHAT'S UP?

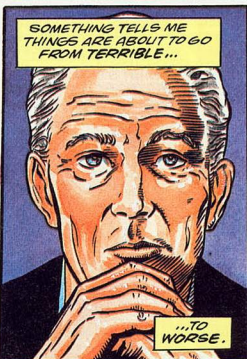
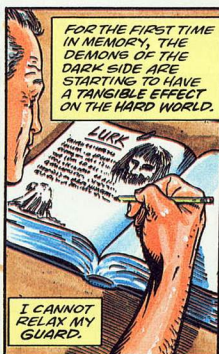
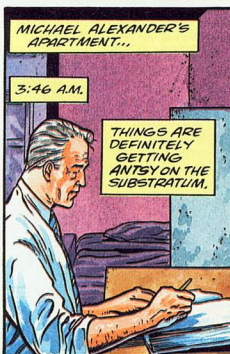
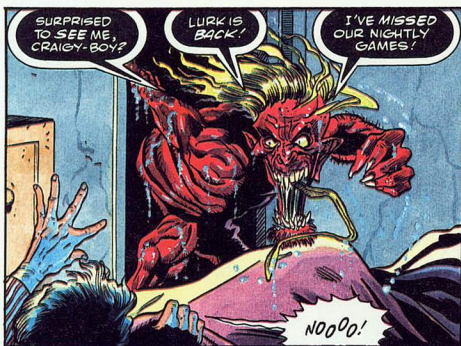
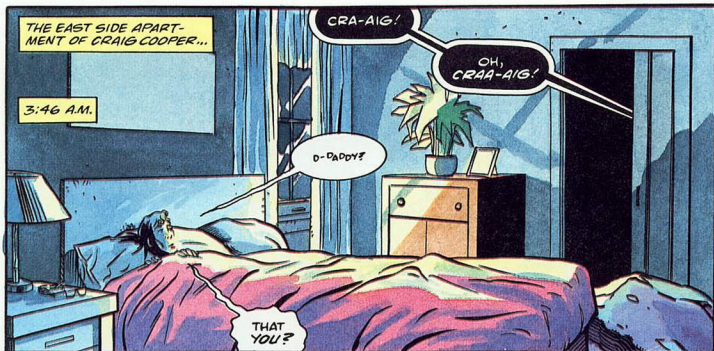
LOOK, I KNOW WHAT YOU'VE BEEN DOING, COOPER. I KNOW WHY YOUR WIFE THREW YOU OUT.

AND IT STOPS--DO YOU UNDERSTAND ME?--AS OF NOW!

I HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, FELLA.

SO YOU SAY.





NEXT: "ONCE A HERO!"

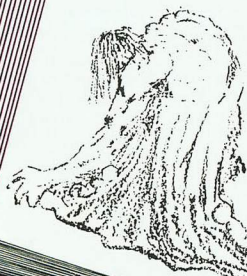
# DETAILS of the DOMINION

Reminder:  
To better understand  
the Quantum Substratum—  
Keep a journal about the things  
I've encountered there.

## LURK

Lurk was created by the collective id of children everywhere, and is the sum of all the darkest fears of childhood. His and as varied as children's imaginations. He is the creature in the closet, the "haunting" shadows under the bed, the voice that says Mommy and Daddy are gone—that bad things have happened to them the minute they're out of sight. Lurk gets his claws—and teeth—into kids so easily: when they're lost, when they hear their parents fighting, even when they go to sleep.... People tell their children that "monster" under the bed is just their imagination, that they're just dreaming about the "thing" in the closet. But he's real, all right. Real enough to touch. And deadly enough to damage or destroy every child he gets his hooks into.

It's not just the strangers in our world that kids should be afraid of....



# letters TO THE EDITOR

DEFIANT welcomes your comments.

Please address all mail to:  
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New York, NY 10016

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Dear Editors,  
I have just read *DARK DOMINION* #4, and all I can say is, "Yow—Red Hot!!!" It is your strongest effort on this title to date. The pencils by Adlard are perfect. The inking and painting by Wilson and Oclair are stunning. The writing was focused and interesting. I would love to see more work by this creative team. *Please!!!*

One thing I specifically loved was the dark look to the Substratum scenes, with the words printed white on black. I felt this was effective.

You have won me over to this title with this issue. Thank you.

A fan,  
Robert Krug  
San Francisco, CA

Dear People,  
The first two issues of *DARK DOMINION* threw out so many sparks that I'm afraid I'm disappointed by the third. Personally, I would like to see stories concerned with the effect the Dark Dominion has on the general populace of the Naked City. This last issue seemed to me to be more "comic booky" than the other ones. Still, I don't want to be too critical, as I imagine the Marvel intimidation contributed a lot to the patchy, rushed feel, so I'll offer some positive ideas instead.

You introduced Spiders of Anxiety in #3, so, if different demons feed on different fears, what about people afraid to grow up, afraid of being overweight (or less than some imagined ideal). Fear of failing to satisfy a loved one's "standards," fear of losing self-control. What about

fear for the safety of others, for children crossing a road, or perhaps fighting a war for your country? This comic has such a brilliant concept behind it, so many opportunities for human drama, not just the generic comic book melodrama that dominates the field. This could be a true "adult" comic, not like the pretentious stuff that is constantly touted as such.

Have you read George Pratt's *Enemy Ace* book, ignoring the horribly "muddy" art? I found it genuinely moving, profound in its simplicity—war scars both victors and vanquished. It's the kind of story I enjoy reading, and I'd love to see you produce some similar "human interest" stories within the *DARK DOMINION* framework. Please, it's too good a concept not to explore it in this way.

Yours sincerely,  
Ian Cairns  
North Shields  
Tyne & Wear  
England

*We are great admirers of George Pratt and of Enemy Ace (including the artwork).*

Dear Mr. Polgardy,  
I wanted to tell you how much I'm enjoying the *DARK DOMINION* series. After three issues, the story gets more rich as we go along. Glimmer and Chasm make great opponents, each with the same abilities but with different outlooks. It's nice to see a hero who fights evil with good, not his fists. (I wish I could see what's growing on some of the people that I know, as well.)

As much as we'd all like to see ourselves in

Glimmer, and not in the direction of Chasm, I think most of us are in-between. I wish that I could have the optimism our hero has.

I really have no suggestions, except maybe to explore the quantum field a bit more. It seems that the possibilities are endless. Thank you, and good luck.

Yours,  
Bart Gerardi  
Brighton, MA

Greetings

Mr. Shooter & Crew—I have no idea how many sugar-laced letters versus hostile letters you receive, but place this one somewhere in-between. I was with Jim and Valiant from day one. I bought, read, and devoured everything and helped finance “the dream,” even starting a Voyager fan club (dedicated to being critical when needed [rare], with suggestions to keep it from being like the others, with their gimmick covers, steroid-infected superheroes, crossovers, and too many titles).

Jim left....So did I. I couldn't keep up! Running from book to book where no one... smiled anymore. Valiant and Image should consider a merger to save paper!

Back to DEFIANT...I just labored through *DARK DOMINION* #4—it fell flat! There is no subtle “Jim” in the background, no quirkiness, no spark! All the titles are as original as heck, but I find myself drifting between them. Jim, you have to start writing the stories again—at least be more of an influence on them. Do

what you do best: Write!

The most complaints I hear from the naysayers is the lack of art (on every title but one—*PLASM*). DEFIANT needs more than one artist! Mr. Lapham cannot draw everything...but the others have to take a hike! Look at the first ten issues of *Solar*, *Magnus*, and *Harbinger*; that art made Valiant. The lack of Barry Windsor-Smith and Steve Ditko has hurt DEFIANT. And I can't believe you (Jim) dropped a hint about Rob Leifeld. Noooooooo! If it comes to pass, Jim, I would hope you give him discipline, a calendar for on-time work, show him the confines of a panel, and no writing duties!

As we shall continue to finance the construction of your opaque castle on high, DEFIANT's foundation is quickly in need of shoring up! We hope the lone lighted window receives “Enlightenment” as well!

Humbly?  
Daniel Beaulieu &  
the Defiant ones!  
Van Buren, Maine

Dear DEFIANT Dominion: The more I read from this series, the more I want to read. Now, with the fourth issue, I realize I'm a part of comic book history in the making. The plot seems to thicken by the page, which is roughly equivalent to the rise in intrigue and potential.

He wears a suit as he does his duty, he's old enough to have lost the colour in his hair, and he's a writer. You may know him as Michael Alexander or perhaps Glimmer or

even Glare. To me, though, he can best be described as Defiant. Why, you ask? Because he doesn't fit the superhero mold, yet his bravery and dedication are beyond reproach. In the short time we have known this man, he has amazingly become one of my favourites. Where else but DEFIANT would we be treated to such original concepts?

Most fascinating of all is seeing these outrageous—ly different concepts fit in the same puzzle. From a world existing on the quantum substratum to a world *beyond the imaginary limits*, *DARK DOMINION* and *WAR-RIORS OF PLASM* are as different as night and day, yet it seems completely natural to see Mr. Alexander and Mrs. Johnson converse. It is plain to see that *WAR DANCER* will serve to further tie DEFIANT's line. I have not the words to describe my impatience, waiting for the War Dancer to spin his tale.

But that is for another time. Regarding *DARK DOMINION* #4, pass on my congratulations to Janet Jackson for her excellent writing debut. Where will we see more of her writing? If she can improve with experience, I'd hate to miss out!

Finally, thanks, Mr. Shooter, for 41 pages with no increase in cover price. Why, there wasn't even a big, flashy, “41-page spectacular” caption on the cover. Unbelievable.

Travis MacKinnon  
Scarborough,  
Ontario  
Canada



# CHARLEMAGNE™



# **JACK “KING” KIRBY**

**Thanks for taking us all far,  
far beyond the imaginary limits.**





# Jim Shooter

## EDITOR IN CHIEF

Our Creative Director, Janet Jackson, is thinking of changing her name to Sheena Easton to avoid confusion.

Just kidding.

Jayjay, as she prefers to be called, for obvious reasons, is one of the brightest and best talents to grace our medium. She's the best colorist—we usually say "painter," since our repro process allows for full-color, three-dimensional rendering—in the business. She's an outstanding graphic designer, photographer, technical illustrator, and mechanical artist. She's also a pre-press and printing expert—a real Renaissance woman.

Not quite best of all, but close, she possesses the kind of brilliant conceptual mind that allows her to create, to invent, to build universes from pure thought. As I've said in this column before, she was responsible for more of the creation of the characters and concepts of the last universe we worked on together—the Valiant universe—than anyone except me. She receives no credit from the corporate pirates and their purchased lackeys who stole Valiant from me, no royalties—and they haven't even paid her the \$28,000 in back pay they owe her—but *I* know what she meant to the success of Valiant, and you should, too. Jayjay *got* the concept, and was actively contributing while those who'd like you to

believe they created it all were insisting that *Harbinger* was "too different." They didn't get it.

Anyway, Jayjay is at it again, helping to build the DEFIANT Universe. She gets it. She's contributing mightily.

There is nobody better.

But *best* of all, she's started writing.

One reason Jayjay's incredible creative ability has been such a secret is that her input has been largely the behind-the-scenes kind, and her name has appeared in the credits almost exclusively as a painter.

Not anymore. Jayjay's first solo flight as a writer was "Bad Moon Rising," the powerful and gritty tale featured in *DARK DOMINION* #4. It's outstanding.

I believe that it is the *best* first effort I've ever seen from any writer. Roll *that* one around in your mind.

Let me clue you in about another talent to watch—an amazing all-around artist named Adam Pollina. His first work was for Triumphant Comics on a series called *Chromium Man*. We felt he was ready and gave him a chance penciling *CHARLEMAGNE*, which begins monthly in March. Remember when Michael Golden arrived on the scene with his debut on *Micronauts*?

Watch this guy.

Another thing I'd like to men-



tion is DEFIANT's upcoming mega-crossover—our first. It's called **SCHISM**. You can see the weave beginning now in all our titles, though the roots of the saga go all the way back to the beginning of time.

Now, I can hear you thinking—is this one of those deals where they try to force me to buy things I don't want to get some gimmick or premium? No. I guarantee you there won't be any trading cards or reward gimmicks for buying them all. The "gimmick" is that it's *good*.

It's the best I've ever done—

and Jayjay is contributing brilliantly. So are Adam, Len, David, and other DEFIANT creative forces.

It'll be "too different" for certain unimaginative weasels. They won't get it.

I think *you* will, though.

**SCHISM.**

Defiantly,

Jim Shooter  
FYM



# THE GOOD GUYS™





# J. Clark Smith

## SALES/MARKETING MANAGER

On the eve of our next two title launches (*WAR DANCER* and *CHARLEMAGNE*), I thought I would take the opportunity to bring you up-to-date on some of the marketing-related doings here at DEFIANT. First, as you might have heard, *CHARLEMAGNE* #0—which was written by Jim Shooter, penciled by Adam Pollina, and inked by Mike Witherby—will be polybagged in *Hero Illustrated* #9 (not bound-in as originally planned). This Zero Issue will not be printed again as a stand-alone comic but will eventually be included in a *CHARLEMAGNE* trade paperback collection.

We were so pleased with the fan interaction with *The Good Guys* Casting Call Contest that we decided to do another one. This time it's *The Bad Guys* we're looking for, and we're going to choose one Bad Guy from among fans 16 and older, and one from among comic book retailers. The prize is \$1,000 cash for each winner, plus each winner's name and likeness created into a villain who will die a terrible death in an upcoming issue of *THE GOOD GUYS*. The contest rules and entry forms can be found in issue #32 of *Wizard* (March cover date) and issue #7 of *Entertainment Retailing* (February cover date). Good luck, and may the worst guy—or gal—win!

Scheduled to begin in March, DEFIANT will be producing a newsletter for fans and retailers.

We haven't yet decided what to call the newsletter (my idea was to call it "*DEFIANT Newsletter*"—so much for my imagination!), but, regardless, it should offer you an interesting insider's view of some of the goings-on here at DEFIANT.

Due to popular demand, Jim Shooter will be conducting many of his "How to Create Comics" seminars in the upcoming months. When Jim was asked why he started these seminars, he explained, "I want to give something back to the industry." Looks like he'll get his wish, if even a fraction of the hundreds of people who've attended his seminars take to heart Jim's tips on creating, writing, and drawing comics! Future seminars will be held at the University of Oklahoma; Los Angeles's Golden Apple Comics; San Francisco's Golden Gate Park; and the Chicago Comic-Con. *Hero Illustrated* has agreed to be our cosponsor for these events, supplying every attendee with a free packet of art supplies. Watch for seminars in your area! Until then, stay DEFIANT!

*J. Clark Smith*



# DARK DOMINION™



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